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SERVICE.

Christianity is preeminently a religion of service. The principle of *service* runs through all the teachings of the Divine Word. The religion which we call Christianity has no meaning aside from this principle of service. The great founder of our holy religion was himself a servant of man. He came all the way from the far-off world on a mission of service to his fellow-men. He came, not to be ministered to, for nobler beings than sinful men, waited upon him in the regions of eternal glory, but he came that he might *serve*. He toiled, early and late, he "went about doing good;" he was a busy man, no idle moments in all his life; from early morning until long after the sun was lost in the western sky, did the Master continue his faithful, loving devotion to man.

From this example of Jesus, his followers should learn a practical lesson. Our Master was a servant. Are we greater than the Master, every true disciple is a servant. He works with his hands and heart and brain for that Jesus who saved him from his sins. We are delighted with the sweet invitations of Jesus: "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." The thought of home and rest and peace enters very largely into our song and exhortation and experience. We are apt to forget that the same Saviour who invites us to rest and sweet peace, also invites us to *service*. "Go work to-day in my vineyard." The same paragraph in which you read of rest for the Christian you also read of a *yoke*. "Take my yoke upon you, and you shall find rest for your souls." Rest and peace and happiness come to us only through toil and service. *Rest* and *service* are inseparably connected. The one implies the other. There is no true rest for the man who does not serve. The highest happiness, the sweetest rest and peace come to us through unselfish service.

This idea of service is lost sight of by too

many who claim to be followers of Christ. Anyone who is at all familiar with the composition of our churches, will readily admit that the number of members who contribute nothing or next to nothing to the spiritual power and work of the church, is largely in excess of those who do. We do not here speak of those "hidden" ones whose spiritual life and activity are not open to the common observation; who are laying up stores of Scriptural instruction in the minds and hearts of their children at home; who cumbered with many cares are living out their lives unto God amid the routine drudgery of every day life, being nourished and administering nourishment all unseen to others. But we speak of those who have great opportunities, unhindered and unhampered, blest with wealth and other talent, and yet so far as *service* is concerned, they are *drones* pure and simple. The kingdom of God is not a place for loafers and idlers. The Christian life is a life of activity, a warfare against sin and wickedness in high places. Never before was there such a demand for Christian service, real, genuine, unselfish *service*, Christian activity in the field of God. We are living in a busy age; a time of intense activity. The world's business runs by steam and electricity and gets its orders by lightning. It is a hurrying, hustling, rustling, busy world, teeming with activities and enterprises on every side. The church in her spiritual commerce and business, must keep somewhat abreast of these tremendous activities. Let the church of the future grow more and more into the *working* church. Let the energy, intellectual activity and brawny force, now devoted to the material progress of the world, be directed along the lines of the moral and spiritual development of humanity, and lead the race of man up the highways of true progress.

How is this service to be rendered? How can we *serve* God? Does he *need* our service? Is there anything that *we* poor sinners can do to advance his glory and honor? We serve him in song and prayer and praise and in the preaching of his Word. But these alone are not practical service. The highest and most God-like form of service is that which we render to our fellow men. Helping the helpless, leading the blind, feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, visiting the sick, bringing souls to Jesus that they may be saved, reforming the drunkard, showing

kindness to the poor, mercy to the widows and orphans in the name of Jesus—this is practical service for God. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these ye have done it unto me." Thus service rendered to those in need is service for God. Such he will accept when done in the name of Jesus.

The foregoing remarks naturally lead to other thoughts on the same subject. To do effectual service for the Master is something that must be learned, and there is but *one way to learn* to love and do spiritual work and that is by *doing it*. No one will learn it by looking on. If the young people would learn how to do church work, they must lay hold with their own hands and hearts and *do it*. An apprentice will never learn a trade by observation. You may learn how to shoe a horse in one or two weeks if you apply yourself to the work, but if you merely "look on" while another does the work, *twenty years* will not make you as proficient as *two week's* personal application. We learn *to do* by *doing*. Can any one learn to make music on the piano by standing and watching others? Certainly not. Pass your own fingers over the keys and by *practice*, learn how. So in church work. If you would do good service for Jesus, go to work and *do something*. Lay hold of some form of spiritual work, and in doing you will both learn *to love* and *to do*, such work. There are people in the church who never learn to do practical service for the Master, not because they have not seen others do it, but because they have never laid hold with their own hands and heart. *Learn to do by doing.*

Sing in fine weather! Any bird can do that. Praise God when all goes well is commonplace work. Every body marks the nightingale above all other birds because she singeth when the other minstrels of the woods are silent and asleep: and thus doth faith praise God under the cloud. Songs in the day are from man, but God himself giveth song in the night.—*Arbitrator.*

There are many times when public sentiment and private principle need to be toned up; when the faint hearted need to take fresh courage; when the cowardly should be made ashamed of their cowardice; when the dishonorable should be made disgusted with their meanness, and when those who have been careless and neglectful should start in a new course of life.